

RUSSIA AND THE WEST IN IRAN

was the daily *Kayhan*, edited by a young professor of law at Teheran

University, Paris-trained Dr. Mesbah-zadeh.

The nationalist newspapers did not support the Shah as much as could be expected. Although devoted to the preservation of the basic state structure as a defensive measure against foreign encroachments, they did not necessarily identify the youthful ruler with the institution of monarchy. Thus the anti-Soviet *Ra'd-i-Emruz* wrote on January 31, 1944, in an article entitled "The Shah and Our-selves":

The cardinal mistake of our rulers was the fact that they never paid attention to public opinion. When the present Shah ascended to the throne, the nation hoped that he would not continue his father's policy, because he had been trained abroad. We are not against the present policy of the Shah. But if he surrounds himself only with people who misinform him, people of the old regime, no advantages will accrue to the nation. At present there is no man in the Shah's environment who enjoys the love, respect, and confidence of the nation. The Shah must part with these men who do not care for the welfare of the people.

The army, as a force loyal to the sovereign, was naturally another strong center of anti-Communist feeling. Its social composition predestined it to represent a conservative viewpoint. Despite its well-known failure to oppose the Anglo-Soviet invasion in 1941, the General Staff stubbornly refused to consider any reduction of its effectiveness. The Iranian Military Academy commissioned large numbers of officers every year. For example, in September, 1943, 515 cadets were promoted to second-lieutenancies. This number would be considerable even in a country much larger than Iran. On the whole the

army, notwithstanding obvious abuses by some greedy officers, presented a rather coherent unit, which could act as a deterrent against Communism.

From the Communist angle the proper policy would have been to exploit class differences in the army ranks. Yet the reported Tudeh endeavors in this direction met with no apparent success.

In contrast, the definite attempts made by Soviet agents to woo officers to their side did bear fruit. This clandestine work took place mainly in garrisons stationed in the northern provinces. It resulted